

Meeting Notes



Downtown Action Team

June 9, 2005

8:00 a.m.

Wells Fargo Center

1248 O Street

Members	Jon Camp Lynnie Green Matt Harris (absent) Deb Johnson Jessica Kennedy (absent) Dan Massoth (absent) Lori McClurg Annette McRoy (absent)	Sachit Nadkarni (absent) Will Scott Kent Seacrest Nader Sepahpur Mike Sisk Clay Smith Jason Smith	Cecil Steward Jane Stricker Ed Swotek Becky Van de Bogart Michelle Waite (absent) Jon Weinberg Terry Werner (absent)
Others Present	Don Arambula Brenda Bergman David Cary George Crandall Tad Fraizer Karl Fredrickson	Ann Harrell Marvin Krout Dallas McGee Polly McMullen Benjamin Morgan	Kent Morgan Brian Praeuner Myrna Tewes Larry Worth Michele Abendroth

Jon Weiberg called the meeting to order at 8:06 a.m. He asked those present to introduce themselves and then introduced George Crandall and Don Arambula of Crandall Arambula.

George Crandall began with a PowerPoint presentation. He provided a short synopsis of the slides presented at the community update the previous evening. The attendees were asked to complete a response sheet. The schedule and scope were also reviewed.

Three draft documents have been prepared including the Master Plan, Implementation Program and Design Guidelines. He noted that they have prepared a fundamental concept diagram, a capacity diagram, and frameworks for land use, transportation, public realm, retail and entertainment, housing, employment, convention center and arena, education, arts/cultural and parking. He then presented a diagram for depressing 9th and 10th Streets under P Street. A promenade system was shown on Centennial Mall, and M, R and 1st Streets.

Catalyst projects were also presented. These projects were identified as top projects to gain momentum, show a real change in the downtown and change the public's perception about the future of downtown. They are also designed to see that existing businesses remain successful.

Catalyst project A is the civic square at 13th and P Streets. Project B is the parking and mixed use development at 13th and P Streets. They would like to see active uses on the first floor with a hotel or residential on top. Project C is the civic square office at 13th and P Streets. Project D is

the P Street infill development. This would reinforce the retail activity along P Street. Project E is the re-design of the Arbor Day Foundation building. They plan to change the exterior of the building. They have provided shop fronts for retail along the street, a corner entry for retail and extended the building onto 12th Street. This is an important addition to P Street and is a great opportunity for a project to happen immediately. Project F is the K Street Power Plant. Project G is the West Haymarket, which creates a vision for this area. It would also be a great addition to the downtown as well.

Crandall stated that they received good suggestions at the community meeting the previous evening. There was a great deal of positive feedback. The issue for this committee is what happens next. These plans need a driver. The first six months are the most critical in order to create momentum.

Crandall concluded the presentation by stating that he would be happy to entertain any questions. Weinberg asked about the briefing of the Historic Preservation Commission, the Nebraska Capitol Environs Commission, and the Urban Design Committee. Crandall stated that these three bodies as well as the Planning Commission were all supportive of the Plans. Typically, if there is a point of contention, it is with the design guidelines as people do not want someone to regulate their design. Oftentimes, when they present the design guidelines, people see how valuable they are. Conceptually, this a product that the community seems to support. Steward added that he attended the briefing of the three bodies, and he believes they saw how the guidelines will underlay some distinctions that each of these committees would put on top of basic foundation of the design guidelines. He did not hear any suggestion that the design guidelines should not happen. He commented that we need to be careful that the guidelines do not become extensions of an otherwise sometimes onerous process and approval. We also need to think about engagement of the development community before they go to final approval.

Johnson asked if it would be possible to extend the event space from L to N Street instead of M to N Street. Crandall stated that he does not anticipate any problems with that.

Weinberg then asked what the next steps of the process are. He suggested that perhaps this group should meet to discuss the issue of trying to engage the community in the process before it goes to the Planning Commission or City Council. They would like to meet within the next six weeks. Secondly, they want to address how the plan relates to Antelope Valley, the University, the Near South Neighborhood, and the Haymarket. We want to make sure the plan works with the surrounding areas. A follow-up issue is to try to get the necessary community consensus in the plan. They would like to see all the groups that are impacted by the Plan to support the Plan.

McMullen asked if the City would need an internal review process. She believes that the public sector wants to know that the City is unified in their support of the Plan. Harrell stated that she believes that the City needs to be involved in the review. Krout added that he believes gaining the support of the major stakeholders is important.

Camp stated that he feels it is important to have a Council briefing before the Plan goes to the City Council. This would provide an opportunity to educate the Council and to ask questions. Streamlining the process is important as well.

McMullen stated that it is important to involve the County Board.

Clay Smith stated that the integration of the design guidelines with the process is critical. Streamlining the process and having one review process is important. Krout stated that they have addressed that issue, and they plan to do that. Arambula added that rules need to be established that are consistently applied. Crandall stated that the Master Plan should be approved quickly. The purpose the Plan is to provide concepts and a framework. The process has been thorough and there has been substantial outreach, so we are positioned nicely. Endorsements by the Downtown Action Team, City Departments, the University, the State, the Downtown Lincoln Association Board, the Chamber of Commerce and County Board are important.

Steward proposed that the committee take three steps. The first step is for the committee to endorse the work of the consultants. Second, the committee should ask DLA and Urban Development to draft a letter to the stakeholders asking them for their comments and giving them a deadline to respond of not later than three weeks. The third action is to set the future agenda for this committee.

Seacrest stated that there are three potential packages, those being the vision, the catalyst projects and the regulatory guidelines. He feels the committee should endorse the concepts and then get into the process of implementation. He is also a little concerned that some groups simply do not like to endorse. Krout suggested that perhaps just the Master Plan should be taken through the process.

Swotek stated that he believes the objective is to get endorsement at the macro level and then work toward the micro level. Steward stated that the immediate goal is to get this document attached to the Comprehensive Plan, so the political process and communication should be the focus. VandeBogart stated that we should stress that this is a strategy for downtown.

Weinberg asked about the time line for taking this to City Council. Krout stated that realistically he thinks it will go to City Council after Labor Day.

Seacrest asked if this is a subarea of the Comprehensive Plan. Krout confirmed that it is a subarea.

Weinberg suggested having another DAT meeting by the end of June. Swotek suggested possibly moving the date up so that we can keep the process moving. Steward commented that he feels the three week wait is not unreasonable due to the letters to the stakeholders. A tentative date of June 29th was set.

Arambula stated that we should develop action plans, which lists the things needed to make that happen. First is the policy piece, which is adoption of the Master Plan. Second is the regulatory

documents that need to be addressed over time. Third is the redevelopment plan or the catalyst projects. There needs to be a game plan and a time frame developed to see these things move forward. He stated that they could provide an example of an action plan as well. Steward remarked that he feels an example would be useful to have at the next meeting.

Clay Smith stated that he feels there are parallel processes. There is a process for getting the Plan endorsed and approved. But he is unclear on the redevelopment plan and financing.

Seacrest stated that he feels that the Committee should make a preliminary endorsement prior to sending the letters to the stakeholders.

Steward moved to endorse the work of the consultants and develop a communication strategy and action plan to gain comments and endorsement of the stakeholders; it was seconded by Clay Smith. There was unanimous approval of the motion by those members present.

McMullen thanked Crandall Arambula for their work. She feels they have been masterful in working through the issues relating to pieces of the plan. Their ability to communicate with the constituents has been marvelous. Crandall then complimented McMullen, McGee, Krout and Morgan for their tremendous work as well as the work of the DAT.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:33 a.m.